



COMDTINST 5270.1D  
APR 23 1998

## COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 5270.1D

Subj: MANAGEMENT OF ELECTRONIC MAIL

Ref: (a) Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts Manual, COMDTINST M5260.3 (Series)  
(b) Standard Subject Identification Codes (SSIC) Manual, COMDTINST M5210.5 (Series)  
(c) Telecommunications Manual, COMDTINST M2000.3 (Series)  
(d) Automated Information Systems (AIS) Security Manual, COMDTINST M5500.13 (Series)  
(e) Paperwork Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (Series)  
(f) Federal Records Act, 44 U.S.C. 3301

1. PURPOSE. To establish policy and guidance for Coast Guard electronic mail (E-mail).
2. ACTION. Area and District Commanders, Commanders of Maintenance and Logistics Commands, Unit Commanding Officers, Assistant Commandants for Directorates, Chief Counsel, and Special Staff Offices at Headquarters shall ensure compliance with the provisions of this Instruction.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. Management of Electronic Mail, COMDTINST 5270.1C is canceled.
4. CHANGES. The following is a summary of the significant changes incorporated into this Instruction.
  - a. Guidelines and procedures for operating, configuring and using specific E-mail applications were removed from this instruction and will be published separately.
  - b. This Instruction addresses Coast Guard E-mail policies regardless of the type of E-mail being used

5. DISCUSSION.

- a. Disclosure Risk. **E-mail affords no user privacy!** Originators must remember that E-mail is not afforded the same status of inviolability given to record messages and hence can be forwarded to recipients not necessarily intended by the originator.
- b. Monitoring. The Coast Guard will monitor E-mail to identify usage patterns and/or abuse.
- c. Federal Records. E-mail made or received by the Coast Guard in connection with organization, functions, policies, procedures, operations, or other Government activities is considered a Federal record. By law, the Coast Guard is required to maintain these Federal records. Refer to reference (e) for Federal record examples, retention and disposition schedules. A new edition of reference (e) is currently under development to better reflect management of both paper and electronic records. However, the disposition and retention schedules will not change.
- d. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). E-mail is included as a form of agency records under FOIA. Therefore the Coast Guard is obligated to include E-mail in its search of responsive records to any FOIA request.
- e. Organizational E-mail. Organizational E-mail is defined as E-mail between organizational elements that requires approval by officials with signature authority.
- f. Individual E-mail. This category comprises E-mail communications between individuals. Individual E-mail can be referenced in correspondence, record messages, or organizational E-mail. Individual E-mail is not approved to promulgate policy.

6. POLICY.

- a. The Telecommunications and Information Systems Command (TISCOM) will promulgate guidance and procedures related to SWIII E-mail application configurations and operations, for example: User-name standards; Management/configuration of E-mail servers and applications; E-mail site naming conventions; E-mail threats and countermeasures; Global Address List (GAL) conventions; E-mail size limitations.
- b. Use of Electronic Mail. Individual E-mail use is subject to the same official Coast Guard business constraints as the postal and telephone services. Misuse or abuse can be addressed under the Uniform Code of Military Justice for military personnel, or COMDTINST 12750 for civilian employees. Personnel shall ensure that their use of E-mail supports Coast Guard mission objectives or is beneficial to the health, safety or welfare of the personnel within the organization.

- c. E-mail Federal Records. Federal record E-mail must be maintained just like any other Federal Record. See reference (e) for retention requirements and disposition schedules.
- d. Correspondence via E-mail. Coast Guard organizational E-mail is the most cost effective and preferred method to deliver official intra-Coast Guard memos and letters. When organizational E-mail is used to send correspondence, including memos, letters, or messages, it should be sent with a return receipt requested in order to verify that delivery occurred. A signed paper copy of electronically delivered correspondence must be retained on file at the point of origin.
- e. Classified Information. Classified information and record messages may only be transmitted via systems accredited for processing classified information, operating at the appropriate security classification level. Inadvertent transmission of classified information shall be reported in accordance with COMDTINST 5510.21 "Information Security Program". Contact the ADP Security Officer or System Administrator, if you are not sure of your network or E-mail system's security level.
- f. Encrypt For Transmission Only (EFTO). The EFTO caveat mandates encryption over Wide Area Networks (WANs) and is only applied to record messages. EFTO messages can only be transferred via normal record message channels. It is unauthorized to transfer EFTO marked messages via the INTERNET, dial up unencrypted circuits, File Transfer Protocol (FTP), or via any unencrypted method.
- g. For Official Use Only (FOUO) and Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) Information. Record messages, correspondence, and information that is unclassified may have markings requiring additional handling or transmission safeguards (e.g. FOUO, SBU). The For Official Use Only (FOUO) caveat is applied to information that for various reasons may be withheld and protected from public release. E-mail messages containing personnel sensitive, privacy act data, source sensitive and proprietary information shall be plainly marked as FOUO or sensitive to ensure proper handling. It is unauthorized to transfer FOUO and SBU information over the INTERNET or to post such designated information on INTERNET web sites. The Coast Guard Data Network Plus (CGDN+), Coast Guard Data Network (CGDN), and the INTRANET are authorized for transmission of and posting of FOUO and SBU designated information. These are considered private Coast Guard owned networks and provide protection from outside access.
- h. Auto Forwarding of Electronic Mail over the Internet. The Auto-Forwarding feature in E-mail applications shall not be used to forward E-mail over circuits such as the INTERNET or to INTERNET addresses. This will ensure appropriate protection of information marked FOUO, E F T O, and SBU. Users may manually forward E-mail providing they review the contents and comply with the restrictions in paragraph 6f. and 6g above.

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- i. Record Messages. Outgoing record messages may be electronically mailed to telecommunication centers, where they are reviewed and assigned a date-time-group by telecommunications center personnel. Guidelines for adding distribution to record messages beyond that intended by the originator are contained in reference (c).
- j. Record Messages on Internet Web sites. Record messages, organizational E-mail, and individual E-mail, shall not be posted on INTERNET Web sites unless so stipulated by the originator by including the phrase "INTERNET RELEASE AUTH" or upon specific authorization from the originator. EFTO, FOUO, classified and privacy information is never authorized for posting on the INTERNET.
- k. E-mail Size Limitations. On SWII, large files (i.e. files larger than 20 kilobytes (approximately 10 pages of text)) should not be attached to an E-mail message. SWII word processing files with embedded or attached graphics files usually exceed this limit. Limits on E-mail sizes on other systems will be promulgated separately by TISCOM.
- l. Attachment File Formats. Attachment rules pertaining to file formats between SWII and SWIII are identified in the SWIII office automation file conversion guide. File transfer formats for all other recipients should be based on the computer environment in which the target addressees are working.

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